

p.m., the Senate resume debate on the above-mentioned amendments; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to Bunning amendment No. 1628; that upon disposition of that amendment, there be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to Tester amendment No. 1614, with no amendment in order to either of the above amendments prior to the vote; that upon disposition of the Tester amendment, the Senate then debate consecutively the following amendments listed below and that the debate time on each be limited to 30 minutes equally divided and controlled in the usual form with no amendment in order to any of the amendments enumerated below; that upon the use or yielding back of all time with respect to the amendments listed below, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed; that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled prior to each vote; and that after the first vote in this sequence, the remaining votes be 10 minutes in duration: The listed amendments are Kohl amendment No. 1519, Thune amendment No. 1609, and Cardin amendment No. 1610.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION HOLD

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, more than 30 months ago, prior to his confirmation as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff told me in my office that if confirmed he would move expeditiously to implement the National Emergency Technology Guard—NET Guard—Program. Unfortunately, Secretary Chertoff has failed to honor this pledge.

The idea of NET Guard was born in the aftermath of 9/11, when a number of communications and technology companies told me they wanted to help New York City when it was attacked—and there was no system for using their volunteers. Then-Senator George Allen and I moved on a bipartisan basis to support a program, called NET Guard, that would ensure that volunteers with technology expertise could be fully utilized in future crises. These teams of local volunteers with science and technology expertise would be vital in assisting our communities in responding to attacks on communications networks or recovering from natural disasters. Congress authorized the establishment of NET Guard 5 years ago, in the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

However, DHS has utterly failed to make any visible progress in implementing this critical program. DHS's failure to act in this critical area is inexcusable.

Had the Department followed through and created NET Guard, I believe it could have played a significant role in alleviating the chaos, confusion, and suffering after Hurricane Katrina. Had NET Guard been properly implemented, there would have been teams of volunteers with expertise ready to mobilize instantly to tackle technical challenges in the wake of the storm. Indeed, on an ad hoc basis, companies and individuals with technology expertise did come forward to assist the suffering. I can only imagine how effective these efforts might have been had NET Guard been in place.

Since my meeting with Secretary Chertoff in 2005, my staff and I have been given one excuse after another for delaying implementation of NET Guard. I have been promised briefings that never happen and reports that never materialize. At the outset, I was willing to accept some delay, but that time has passed.

We know that it is only a matter of time before there is another crisis that will put American communities and their critical communication networks at risk. Further delay is unacceptable.

Out of options, I reluctantly feel that I must put a hold on the nomination of Dennis Schrader who has been nominated by President Bush to serve as Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, until the NET Guard Program is up and running nationwide.

It gives me no pleasure to place this hold and I do so grudgingly.

I recognize the importance of the position of Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, but the position didn't even exist for the first 4 years after the Department of Homeland Security was created; it was just created in March. Since then, Mr. Corey Grouber has served as Acting Deputy Administrator, so delaying Mr. Schrader's confirmation while the long-overdue Net Guard Program is put in place will not leave the office leaderless. Mr. Corey Grouber has extensive experience at FEMA, so he can manage for a little longer while the NET Guard Program is established. Unfortunately, I see no evidence that the Secretary intends to uphold his pledge to me, and until he does, I will keep my hold on Mr. Schrader's nomination.

I hope DHS will quickly begin to take action so I can remove this hold and Mr. Schrader's nomination can move through the Senate.

DRIVE ACT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of amendment No. 1572, the DRIVE Electric amendment. Senator SALAZAR is the sponsor. Senators BAYH, BROWNBACK, COLEMAN, KLOBUCHAR, SMITH, CLINTON, ALEXANDER, BIDEN, and I are cosponsors.

I know I speak for my fellow DRIVE Act cosponsors when I thank the members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, led by Chairman BINGAMAN and Ranking Member DOMENICI, for reporting versions of DRIVE Act provisions out of that committee in May. And I know my fellow DRIVE Act cosponsors are as gratified as I am that Chairman BINGAMAN and 62 other Senators voted Tuesday to adopt the DRIVE Act's original oil savings requirement as part of this Energy bill.

During the debate preceding Tuesday's vote, Senator DOMENICI said that Congress should not abdicate its responsibility to spell out the policies that the Federal Government will use to achieve the oil savings targets that now are part of this Energy bill. I could not agree more. That is why my DRIVE Act cosponsors are back here today to boost the Energy bill's transportation electrification provisions up to their original DRIVE Act strength.

Once restored to its original strength, the DRIVE Act's electrification program will give the Federal Government a vital tool that will take this Nation a considerable distance toward the oil savings targets that the Senate adopted on Tuesday.

Currently, our transportation sector runs on oil. That is the problem the Senate is trying to solve with this Energy bill. We are passing a law in order to move our transportation sector off of oil, in part by moving it onto alternative fuels. In expanding the use of various alternative fuels, we should not overlook our own existing electrical grid.

Most electricity generation in this country is fueled by domestically mined coal. A substantial amount of electricity generation in this country is fueled by uranium mined in the United States or Canada. While only a small amount of electricity is generated in the U.S. using renewable sources such as solar and geothermal energy, we know we can increase that amount substantially. Only 2 percent of the electricity generated in this country is generated using oil.

So the more that we use electricity to power our cars, trucks, trains, and ships, the more we will be using domestic energy sources, and the less dependent we will be on oil. Fortunately, the technology is now available to allow us to plug in our cars at night, when existing powerplants are underused and electricity is especially cheap, so that during the day, the cars run largely on battery power. And the technology is now available to allow trucks to plug in at truck stops—and ships to plug in at ports—so that they don't use oil to run their on-board systems when they're stationary.

The founder of a U.S. company called A123 testified before my global warming subcommittee in May about durable, safe, light-weight, high-capacity batteries his company has developed for vehicle use. He is using that technology to convert hybrid vehicles into

plug-in hybrids today. He drives such a car every day. It gets 150 miles to the gallon. The electricity that it takes to drive the vehicle 40 miles costs about one-tenth as much as it costs to drive the same distance on gasoline. I understand that General Motors believes it can start selling such plug-in hybrid vehicles to American consumers within the next 2 years.

At the same hearing in May, the head of global research at General Electric testified that the company had already developed a hybrid electric locomotive.

Even if you count the pollution from the powerplants—including coal-fired powerplants—used to charge a plug-in hybrid or fully electric vehicle, or to run an idling truck or ship, powering these vehicles with electricity releases far, far less pollution into the environment than powering them with oil does.

The underlying bill contains some language to help accelerate the deployment of these electrification technologies in the transportation sector. The DRIVE Electric amendment would strengthen those provisions substantially. There is broad, bipartisan support here in the Senate for strengthening them. There is no reason not to strengthen them.

Here is what the DRIVE Electric amendment would do: The DRIVE Electric amendment would expand the Advanced Transportation Technology Program in section 245 of H.R. 6 and augment the Energy Storage Competitiveness Program in section 244 of H.R. 6.

More specifically, the DRIVE Electric amendment would expand the near-term vehicle technology deployment program in the underlying bill by adding a revolving loan program. This will maximize the effectiveness of the program in stimulating the installation of technologies to reduce petroleum use and cut emissions. In addition, the amendment sets forth types of projects—including port, truck stop and airport electrification—that will qualify for the program.

The amendment includes a program to remove barriers for existing and new applications of electric drive and hybrid transportation technologies. It would establish an electricity usage program to increase the understanding of and management of the electricity grid as a source of power for the transportation sector.

The amendment would also direct the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop information on the grid-side of electric drive technology. It would authorize grants for electric utilities to promote customer programs for load management and off-peak use.

While the underlying bill would allow for basic and applied energy storage research, the DRIVE Electric amendment would establish an electric drive transportation research and development program. That program would address additional research needs, including:

high efficiency on-board and off-board charging components; high power and energy-efficient drive-train systems for passenger and commercial vehicles and for nonroad vehicles; control system development and power-train development and integration; application of nano-materials technology, and use of smart vehicle and grid interconnection devices and software.

The amendment also would direct the Energy Department to evaluate the benefits of plug-in electric drive technology, by creating testing programs to assess the full potential of benefits in terms of reducing criteria air pollutant emissions, energy use, and petroleum consumption.

The amendment also would establish a nationwide education program for electric drive transportation technology, including financial assistance to create new university-level degree programs for needed engineers, supporting student plug-in hybrid electric vehicle competitions, and other educational efforts.

Finally, the amendment would update the fleet acquisition program established under the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to assure that fleet operators subject to that law can choose electric drive transportation technologies, including hybrid electric vehicles, for compliance.

I believe this amendment is exactly the kind of commonsense, win-win, bipartisan measure that the American people like to see coming out of Congress. I respectfully ask that my colleagues support the DRIVE Electric amendment.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORIAM: DR. RON BANGASSER

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the lifetime of achievement and community leadership of Dr. Ron Bangasser. Dr. Bangasser passed away in Redlands on May 2, 2007.

Born on January 25, 1950, in Freeport, IL, Ron Bangasser served the Inland Empire, his State and our Nation as a physician and advocate for health and wellness. After completing medical school at Chicago Medical School, Dr. Bangasser trained at San Bernardino County Medical Center in southern California, later served at St. Luke's Presbyterian Hospital in Milwaukee, and with the Navy Diving Medical Officer's Training School. Most recently, he was a physician with the Beaver Medical Group in Inland Southern California, where he served as medical director and director of external affairs. He also served as the chief of staff at nearby Redlands Community Hospital. In 1986, Dr. Bangasser founded the Paul F. Bangasser Wound Care Center at Redlands Community Hospital, named after and dedicated to his father.

Dr. Bangasser was a tremendous advocate for patients and physicians,

serving with a number of medical associations. For 28 years he provided key leadership for the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association. He served as the speaker for the California Medical Association's house of delegates, and as chair for the California delegation to the American Medical Association. He also served as chair of the California Medical Association's finance committee, and vice chair of the California Medical Association's hospital medical staff section.

Dr. Bangasser was also the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and honors. He received the Nicholas P. Krikes, M.D. Award for Outstanding Contributions to the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the American Medical Association Pride in the Professions Award, Riverside County Medical Association's Outstanding Contribution to Organized Medicine Award, the California Medical Association Young Physician's Joseph Boyle Young at Heart Award, the James C. MacLaggan, M.D. Political Action Award, and the Medical Board of California's Physician Humanitarian Award.

While serving in each of his varied capacities, Dr. Bangasser also found the time to serve as the team physician for the San Bernardino Valley College football team for 22 years. San Bernardino Valley College honored him for these years of service and awarded him its Distinguished Service Award in 1999.

Dr. Ron Bangasser will be remembered for all that he did to make his community and this country a better place to live. His was a life well lived.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2638. An act making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2642. An act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of